

Wales Mental Health in Primary Care

(WaMH in PC)

Bursaries 2004

Name of Applicants: Stuart Williams and Megan Bhuller

Subject: New Mothers Support Group

INTRODUCTION

According to a recent Community Audit, Gilfach Goch has very high levels of need among many residents – characterised by benefit dependency, low levels of employment, very poor skills, severe educational underachievement, poor health, a youthful population, and disorientated families who struggle to cope. Gilfach Goch is placed as the 39th most disadvantaged electoral ward out of 865 in Wales in the 2000 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

There are dependent children in 37% of all households (the 6th highest figure for Rhondda Cynon Taff wards), and there are relatively more 16 to 19-year-olds than in any other part of the County Borough.

It is widely acknowledged by Health Professionals that there are high levels of depression within the community. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that there are a significant number of mother's suffering from post-natal depression.

In view of this, the Healthy Living Project in partnership with the local health visitor propose to set up a support group for mother's suffering from post-natal depression.

The aims of which are to offer social support, alleviate isolation and depression, promote health and parenting skills, build up self-confidence and provide information on the services available in the area.

Method

All new mothers are routinely assessed using the Edinburgh Post-Natal Depression Scale. For those mothers identified as being appropriate for the group, they will be asked to complete the Becks Depression Inventory prior to attending the group. This will be repeated at approximately 12-week intervals together with a satisfaction survey.

The group will meet on a weekly basis at a local community building with childcare facilities and access to refreshments. It is envisaged that it will be an informal group with guest speakers invited to talk on a variety of topics ranging from medication to healthy eating and exercise.

This will form part of a twelve-week programme that mothers will be provided with on arrival to the group. Each week a topic will be discussed that is appropriate to the needs of new mothers.

RESULTS

To see a decrease in the level of isolation and increase in the amount of social contact.

For mothers to report an improvement in their self-esteem and confidence.

For mothers to develop their knowledge about post-natal depression and its treatment.

For mothers to develop their parenting and stress management skills.

To see an improvement in the scores of the Edinburgh Post-Natal Depression Scale and Becks Depression Inventory.